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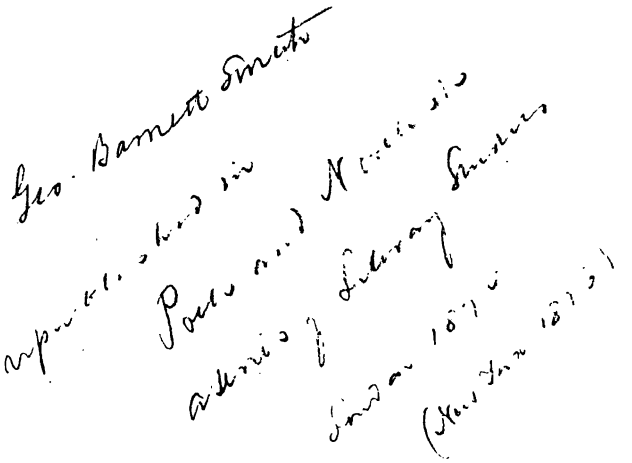

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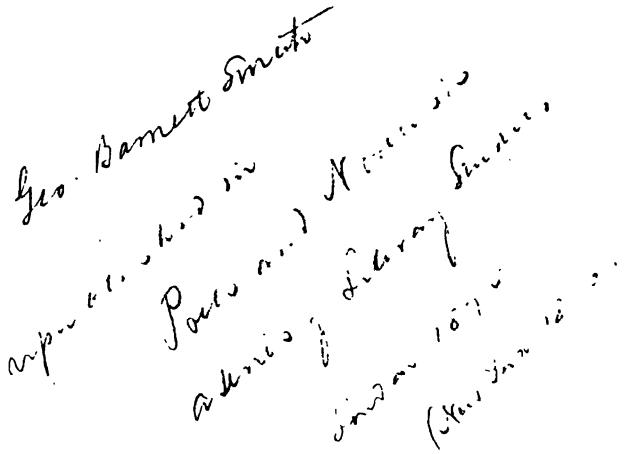

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THE pure humourist is one of the rarest of literary characters. His nature is not content with detecting foibles, nor his pen with pointing them out for derision; his purpose is infinitely higher and nobler. The humourist must have emotions, nerves, sensibilities, and that marvellous sympathy with human nature which enables him to change places at will with other members of his species. Humour does not produce the sneer of Voltaire; it rather smiles through the tear of Montaigne. 'True humour,' it has been wisely said, 'springs not more from 'the head than from the heart; it is not contempt, its essence 'is love; it issues not in laughter, but in still smiles, which lie 'far deeper. It is a sort of inverse sublimity; exalting as it 'were into our affections what is below us, while sublimity draws 'down into our affections what is above us. It is, in fact, the 'bloom and perfume, the purest effluence of a deep, fine, and 'loving nature.' Without humour, society would exist in Icelandic snows: wit, like the winter sun, might glint upon the icebergs, but they would not be plastic in his glance—calm, lofty, and cold they must remain. But humour is the summer heat that generates while it smiles—the power which touches dead things and revivifies them with its generous warmth and geniality. Wit engages and amuses the individual intellect; humour knits hearts together; is, in truth, in a broad sense, that 'touch of nature which makes the whole world kin.' Now the world may be regarded as being composed of three classes, viz., those of us who laugh, those *with* whom we laugh, and those *at* whom we laugh; and the tenderest solicitude is experienced by each unit of humanity lest, through some fortuitous circumstances, he should irretrievably find himself a denizen of the last-named class. To some of the first class is given the power of directing the laughter of others, and this power is current as wit; when to the faculty of originating ridicule is added the power of concentrating pity or pathos upon the subject, this may be styled humour. But the irony must be subjugated to the feeling. The heart must love while the countenance may smile. It will, then, be perceived, in view of these distinctions, how the humourist may assert a claim in all great and essential things superior to that which can be advanced by the wit. Humourists are the salt of the national intellectual

life. England, who occasionally claims a questionable superiority in some respects over other nations, may, in the growth of genuine humour, be allowed the pre-eminence, Germany approaching her perhaps in the nearest degree. What other literature, since the days of Elizabeth, can show such a roll of humourists as that which is inscribed with the names (amongst others) of Richardson, Addison, Steele, Prior, Gay, Smollett, Fielding, Sterne, and Goldsmith? Yet after the closing names of this galaxy a dearth was witnessed like that which immediately preceded their advent. It appears as though the soil of literature, having grown to its utmost capacity the product of humour, demanded time for recuperating its powers. During the past thirty or forty years another growth sprang up, and Hood, Lamb, and other inheritors of the marvellous gift have enriched the world with the perfume of their lives and works. Amongst the latest band of humourists, however, there is no name more remarkable or more justly distinguished than that which is now under consideration.

From the operation of various causes, the works of Thackeray have not hitherto enjoyed a circulation commensurate with their intrinsic merits. The sale of the best of his writings in his lifetime fell far short of the popular demand for the works of Scott or Dickens. But their hold on society, and the recognition of their permanent value and excellence, have gone on steadily increasing with each succeeding year, and very recently a new and complete edition of them has been issued, which is within the reach of all readers. At this period, then, it may be fitting to consider the life's work of this deepest and purest of modern English satirists.

It was in these pages that the first substantial recognition of the genius of the author of 'Vanity Fair' appeared: a quarter of a century has elapsed since then; but in the short period between that epoch in his career and his death, a rapid succession of brilliant works issued from his pen—a pen facile to charm, to instruct, and to reprove. These works have fully justified the terms of praise in which we referred to his first great fiction. Yet it would be difficult to name a writer of fiction of equal excellence who had so little of the inventive and imaginative faculty. Keenness of observation and a nice appreciation of character supplied him with all the materials of his creations. He wrote from the experience of life, and the foibles of mankind which he satirised were those that had fallen under his notice in the vicissitudes of his own career, or might sometimes be traced in the recesses of his own disposition. The key, therefore, to Thackeray's works is to be

found in his life; and few literary biographies would be more interesting, if it were written with a just and discriminating pen. We would venture to suggest to his accomplished daughter, who has shown by her own writings that some at least of his gifts have descended to her by inheritance, that she should undertake a task which no one else can fulfil with so natural and delicate a feeling of her father's genius. Probably it might already have been attempted, but for the extreme repugnance of Thackeray himself to allow his own person to be brought before the world, or to suffer the sanctity of private correspondenee to be invaded. Nobody wrote more amusing letters; but he wrote them not for the public. As it is, even his birth and descent have not been correctly stated in the current works of the day. His great grandfather was in the Church, once Master of Harrow, and afterwards an Archdeacon. He had seven sons, one of whom, also named William Makepeace Thackeray, entered the Civil Service of India, became a Member of Council, and sat at the Board with Warren Hastings, some of whose minutes he signed. The son of this gentleman, and the father of our novelist, was Richmond Thackeray, also a Civil servant, who died in 1816 at the early age of thirty. Thackeray himself was born at Calcutta, in 1811, and was sent to England when he was seven years old. On the voyage home the vessel touched at St. Helena, where the child saw Napoleon Bonaparte. The black servant who attended him attributed to the ex-Emperor the most ravenous propensities. 'He eats,' said the sable exaggerator, 'three sheep every day, and all the children he 'can lay hands on.' The joke figured years afterwards in one of Thackeray's sketches. This early connexion with India left its mark in his memory, and the pleasant allusions to the great Ramchunder and the Bundelcund bank were suggested by the traditions of his own infancy. He inherited from his father (who died when he was five years old) a considerable fortune, part of which had fortunately been settled on his mother, who was re-married to Major Carmichael Smyth. The remainder was left at his own disposal, and rendered him an object of envy and admiration to his less fortunate contemporaries. The boy was sent to the Charter-house, where he remained for some years; and here again the reader familiar with his works may trace a multitude of allusions to his school-days under Dr. Russell, then the master of that school. About the year 1828 he went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was the friend and contemporary of Tennyson, Venables, John Mitchell Kemble, Charles and Arthur Buller,

John Sterling, R. Monckton Milnes, and of that distinguished set of men, some of whom had preceded him by a year or two, who formed what was called the Society of the Apostles, though he was not himself a member of that society. It must be confessed that at Cambridge Thackeray gave no signs of distinguished ability. He was chiefly known for his inexhaustible drollery, his love of repartee, and for his humourous command of the pencil. But his habits were too desultory for him to enter the lists of academic competition, and, like Arthur Pendennis, he left the University without taking a degree. At the age of twenty-one he entered upon London life; he visited Weimar, which he afterwards portrayed as the Court of Pumpernickel; and he was frequently in Paris, where his mother resided since her second marriage. His fortune and position in society seemed to permit him to indulge his tastes and to live as a gentleman at large. But the dream was of short duration. Within a few months he contracted a sleeping partnership which placed his property in the hands of a man who turned out to be insolvent, and the fortune he relied on was lost before he had enjoyed it. The act was one of gross imprudence, no doubt, and he suffered bitterly for it; but it is not true, as has sometimes been supposed, from his lively description of scenes of folly and vice, that he lost his money by his own personal extravagance. Thus then he found himself, at two or three and twenty, with very reduced means, for he had nothing to live on but the allowance his mother and grandmother were able to make him; with no profession, with desultory tastes and habits, and with no definite prospects in life before him. His first scheme was to turn artist and to cultivate painting in the Louvre, for he now resided chiefly with his relations in Paris. But in the art of design he was, in truth, no more than an accomplished amateur. The drawings with which he afterwards illustrated his own books are full of expression, humour, grace, and feeling; but they want the correctness and mastery of the well-trained artist. He turned then, with more hope, at the age of thirty, to the resources of the pen. But it is remarkable that all his literary productions of this, his earlier period, were anonymous; and his literary efforts, though not wanting in pungency and an admirable style, were scattered in multifarious publications, and procured for him but small profit and no fame. These years from thirty to seven-and-thirty, which ought to have been the brightest, were the most cheerless of his existence. He wrote letters in the 'Times' under the signature of Manlius Pennialinus. He wrote an article on Lord

Brougham in the 'British and Foreign Review,' which excited attention. But political writing—even political sarcasm—was not his forte; and when politics ceased to be a joke, they became to him a bore. Amongst other experiments he accepted the editorship of a London daily newspaper, called 'The Constitutional and Public Ledger,' but—like its namesake, which had been started and edited, a few years before, by another man of great literary genius, destined to achieve in after-life a more illustrious career—this journal lingered for ten months and then expired. The foundation of 'Punch' was a work after Thackeray's own heart, and he contributed largely to the earlier numbers. But it was not till 1841 that he really began to make his mark in literature, under the well-known pseudonym of Michael Angelo Titmarsh, a name in which the dream of the artist still haunted the fancy of the humourist. In the midst of these perplexities, with that genuine tenderness of feeling which lay at the bottom of all his sarcasms, Thackeray fell in love, and married a young lady who might have sat for the portrait of his own Amelia, but who was not better endowed than himself with the world's goods, and much less able than himself to battle with adverse fortune. But his domestic life was overclouded by a greater calamity than these, and the malady of his wife threw a permanent cloud over the best affections of his heart, which were thenceforward devoted to his children alone. Such was the school in which the genius of Thackeray was educated. It was not imaginative; it was not spontaneous; it was the result of a hard and varied experience of life and the world. It left him somewhat prone to exaggerate the follies and baseness of mankind, but it never froze or extinguished his love and sympathy for justice, tenderness, and truth. In 1847, when he was six-and-thirty years of age, he braced himself up, for the first time, for a great and continuous literary effort, and he came before the world, which hitherto had known him only as a writer of jests and magazine articles, as the author of 'Vanity Fair.' His style, which was the result of the most careful and fastidious study, had now attained a high degree of perfection. In the comparison which was naturally drawn between himself and Dickens, then in the heyday of popularity, it was obvious that in the command of the English language Thackeray was incomparably the master. His style was to the style of Dickens what marble is to clay; and although he never attained to the successful vogue of his contemporary, in his lifetime, it was evident to the critical eye that the writings of Thackeray had in them that which no time could dim or obliterate.

With this novel, then, so surprising in its frankness and in its knowledge of human nature, commenced a career which could know no repression. A mine of gold had been struck, and the nuggets were cast up freely by the hands of the hard and honest worker. In the writing of books admired by every hater of pretence, and the delivery of lectures which were as new in their style and treatment as his novels, the rest of the life of Thackeray passed away. The last fifteen years of it were years of success, celebrity, and comparative affluence. He had attained a commanding position in literature and in society, though it must be acknowledged that except in a very small circle of intimate friends, he rarely put forth any brilliant social qualities. How he impaled snobbery in 'Punch' and gave a new impetus to serial literature by his editorship of the 'Cornhill Magazine,' are facts too widely disseminated to be dilated upon. A most goodnatured editor, conscientious as well as kind, was Thackeray; but the work was not to his taste, and after a short period he relinquished it at a large pecuniary sacrifice. To that terrible person, the owner of a 'rejected contribution,' he was frequently most generous, breaking the literary disappointment with the solace of a bank-note in many instances. But he found it painfully difficult to say 'No' when it became imperative to reject would-be contributors, and fled from the field in despair accordingly. To a friend he said on one occasion, 'How can 'I go into society with comfort? I dined the other day at '——'s, and at the table were four gentlemen whose mas-'terpieces of literary art I had been compelled to decline with 'thanks.' So he informed his readers for the last time that he would 'not be responsible for rejected communications.' On Christmas Eve, 1863, came the event which touched the heart of Britain with a genuine grief. The not altogether uneventful career of one of the truest and best of men was closed. When it was known that the author of 'Vanity Fair' would charm the world no longer by his truthful pictures of English life, the grief was what we would always have it be when a leader of the people in war, arts, or letters is stricken down in battle—deep, general, and sincere.

Postponing for the moment a consideration of what we conceive to be the leading characteristics of Thackeray's genius, a certain measure of insight into the author's mind may be gained by a glance at his works—premising that they are not taken in strict chronological order. First, with regard to his more important novels. The key with which he opened the door of fame was undoubtedly 'Vanity Fair.' Though other writings

of a less ambitious nature had previously come from his pen, until the production of this book there was no evidence that Thackeray would ever assume the high position in letters now unanimously awarded to him. But here, at any rate, was demonstrative proof that a new star had arisen. And yet general as was this belief no intelligible grounds were for a time assigned for it. The novelist himself always regarded his first work as his best; though we think that in this respect he has followed the example of Milton and other celebrated authors, and chosen as his favourite that which is not absolutely the best, though it may be equal to any which succeeded it. Probably the book was one round whose pages a halo had been thrown by various personal circumstances. But the famous yellow covers in which the 'Novel without a Hero' originally appeared were not at first sought after with much avidity. Soon, however, it became known that a new delineator of life was at work in society, and one whose pen was as keen as the dissecting knife of the surgeon. An author had sprung up who dared to shame society by a strong and manly scorn, and by proclaiming that it ought to loathe itself in dust and ashes. The world was not unwilling to read the reflection of its foibles and its vices mirrored with so much wit, originality, and genius. How account otherwise for the favour which the work subsequently attained, when it lacked as a novel many of those characteristics for which novels are most eagerly read? To the initial difficulty of a story without a hero, the writer had voluntarily added that of a lack of consecutiveness and completeness. It was probably begun by the author not only without a hero, but without a plot. We doubt whether any of his novels were written on a plan. Some of them evidently turned under his pen into something quite different from what he had originally intended. His mode of narrative consists in a series of pictures after the manner of Hogarth, but their popularity sufficiently attested their accuracy. There is no one character in 'Vanity Fair' which can be deemed perfectly satisfactory—not that the public always cares for that, preferring sometimes the most thoroughpaced villany (viewing authorship as a question of art) to the most superlative virtue. Becky Sharp, the unprincipled governess, has been as unduly detested as Amelia Sedley has been too lavishly praised. There is nothing in the earlier chapters to prove that Becky Sharp was naturally and entirely unprincipled and unscrupulous, and it was evidently the intention of the author to show that society might justly assume a great portion of the responsibility for the after-development of those qualities. With certain ground to work upon, and given conditions as adjuncts,

the influence of society on natures like Becky Sharp's would be to encrust them with selfishness and superinduce complete hypocrisy. If heroine there be in the novel it is this clever adventuress, and except on some half-dozen occasions it is scarcely possible to avoid a pity approaching to contempt for the character of Amelia Sedley, who is intended to personify the good element an author generally casts about to discover in concocting a story. Captain Dobbin is overdrawn, and one is well-nigh tempted to wish that he had a little less virtue and a little more selfishness. While we love him he has a tendency to make us angry. The most masterly touches in the volume are those in which the portraits of the Marquis of Steyne and of Sir Pitt Crawley are sketched. The aristocracy furnish the villains and the most contemptible specimens of the race, whilst the excellent persons come from the ranks of the middle class and the poor—their namby-pambyism, however, now and then reducing their claims to our regard. The author speaks for the most part in his own person, and herein lies one of the principal reasons for the success of the book. We feel the satirist at our elbow; he is not enveloped in thick folds in the distance; as we read his trenchant observations and withering sarcasms we can almost see the glances of scorn or of pity which he would assume when engaged in his task. Well might the world exclaim that this was no novice who thus wrote of its meannesses and its glory, its virtues and its vices. This novel lifted him at once, and justly, into the position of one of the ablest writers of subjective fiction. It is especially remarkable in connexion with 'Vanity Fair' to note the extremely little conversational matter in a tale of this great length; another proof that the strength of the author lay not in the conventional groove of the novelist, but in those other powers of Thackeray—rare observation, an acute penetration of motives, an abhorrence of sham or pretence, and an entirely new and genuine humour.

In 'Pendennis,' the next great work by Thackeray, there is not only some approach to a consecutive plot, but we are inclined to think finer drawing of individual character than in its predecessor. There is not so much brilliancy of writing, but there is a considerable advance in the art of the novelist. With all the graphic touches which took form in the features of Becky Sharp, Amelia Sedley, and Captain Dobbin, there is nothing in the earlier work to compare with the portraits of George Warrington, Helen Pendennis, and Laura. The hero Arthur is one who succumbs to the ordinary temptations of life, and has very little attaching to him of that romance in which a hero

is generally expected to be enshrined. Because it was so natural the book was not regarded at first as very successful: nothing could be truer to the original than the manner in which Arthur Pendennis is sketched, and his love passages with Miss Fotheringay, the actress, are naïvely related; but it was of course impossible to become inspired with the same feelings towards him as were excited by the chivalric heroes of Scott. A man who resorts in the morning to a bottle of soda water to correct the exuberant spirits of the night before is not calculated to awaken much personal adoration. He is too fallible, and the novel-reading community demands sinless heroes and heroines ere it consents to raise them to the lofty pedestal accorded to its greatest favourites. There is no exaggeration in a single portrait to be found in 'Pendennis;' all are true; are true to the minutest detail, and the author has simply acted as the photographer to his clients—he 'nothing extenuates or sets down 'aught in malice.' The early follies of Pendennis, and his university career—which was chiefly noticeable for splendid suppers and dealings with money-lenders at a hundred per cent.—are described with no sparing pen. The case is typical of thousands now, and is no credit to the youth of the universities. 'Only wild oats,' the apologists for undergraduate extravagance remind us; but there is no natural necessity that this particular university crop should be sown; many men, worthy men too, are compelled to go through life without the satisfaction of having ruined their friends by their follies. The result overtook Pendennis which righteously succeeds, we suppose, to dissipation and neglect of study. When the degree examinations came 'many of his own set who had not half his 'brains, but a little regularity and constancy of occupation, 'took high places in the honours or passed with decent credit. 'And where in the list was Pen the superb, Pen the wit and 'dandy, Pen the poet and orator? Ah, where was Pen the 'widow's darling and sole pride? Let us hide our heads and 'shut up the page. The lists came out; and a dreadful rumour 'rushed through the University that Pendennis of Boniface was 'plucked.' Yet though he fled from the University the widow went on loving him still, just the same, and little Laura hugged to her heart with a secret passion the image of the young scapegrace. So inexplicable and so devoted is the character of woman! The little orphan paid the debts of the dashing, clever hero. More sketches of society with its hollowness and pretence follow this revelation, and then we find Arthur in the modern Babylon soon to become the friend of George Warrington, who was destined to be his guide, philosopher, and

friend. The brains of our hero now became of service, and in dwelling on his intellectual labour Thackeray details the secret history of a literary hack, together with the story of the establishment of a newspaper for 'the gentlemen of England,' the prospectus of which was written by Captain Shandon in Fleet Prison. Brilliant indeed were the intellectual Bohemians who wrote for that witty and critical journal. There are no more interesting or amusing sketches in the whole of the author's novels than those relating to this paper, and the intimate knowledge displayed in the details of the schemes of rival printers and publishers was a part of the author's own dearly bought experience. Arthur is strangely consoled in his endeavours to live by the aid of literature by his uncle Major Pendennis, who assures him that 'poetry and genius, and that 'sort of thing, were devilishly disreputable' in his time. But success waits on him, and he can afford to smile at the eccentric officer. Were it not for the closing pages of 'Pendennis' we could almost feel angry with Thackeray for challenging our interest in Arthur. But the lesson he had to teach compensates for all disappointments. No stones are to be unnecessarily thrown at the erring, and the shadows in Pendennis's life are to teach others how to avoid similar errors. The unworthy often run away with the honours. The history of Pendennis closes with fruition for the hero, while the nobler character, George Warrington, suffers disappointment. But then the novelist justly observes:—

'If the best men do not draw the great prizes in life, we know that it has been so ordained by the Ordainer of the lottery; we own, and see daily, how the false and worthless live and prosper, while the good are called away, and the dear and young perish untimely. We perceive in every man's life maimed happiness, the frequent falling, the bootless endeavour, the struggle of right and wrong, in which the strong often succumb and the swift fail; we see flowers of good blooming in foul places, as in the most lofty and splendid fortunes, flaws of vice and meanness, and stains of evil, and, knowing how mean the best of us is, let us give a hand of charity to Arthur Pendennis, with all his faults and shortcomings, who does not claim to be a hero, but only a man and a brother.'

Passing by temporarily the lectures on the Humourists in order to preserve the chain of novels unbroken, we come to a work which is perhaps the most satisfactory of all Thackeray's writings, regarding them purely in the light of literary art. There are few productions in the world of fiction which exhibit the finish of 'Esmond,' for the author has not only drawn his characters with unusual skill, but delighted the reader with

repeated bursts of natural, unaffected eloquence, in language sedulously borrowed from the age of Steele and Addison. As regards style, indeed, 'Esmond' is an incredible *tour-de-force*, and is by far the most original of all his books. For the first time the author transplants us to that age which afterwards became of such absorbing interest to him that he could not tear himself away from it; so imbued was he altogether with the literature of the time of Queen Anne and George I. that at last he seemed to live in it. At his death he had another work in contemplation whose period was fixed in the eighteenth century. It is easy even to the uninitiated to discover that Thackeray wrote this history of Esmond, a colonel in the service of Her Majesty Queen Anne, thoroughly *con amore*. He revelled in his theme and in the associations it brought with it. Genial, witty Dick Steele and Mr. Joseph Addison are introduced to us, and we see them, along with Esmond, drinking the Burgundy, which, says Addison, 'my Lord Halifax sent me.' We are carried through portions of Marlborough's campaigns, and the spirit blazes with enthusiasm at the pluck which wrought such valiant deeds, and brought undying honour on the British arms. The avarice and ambition of the brilliant Churchill are forgotten as the plans of his consummate genius are unravelled. Esmond's career with General Webb is traced with intense interest, and the scenes become as real to us as they undoubtedly seemed to the author. The plot of the book is not of the happiest description, the machinations of the Jacobites being interwoven largely with the thread of the narrative. The hero loves in the outset Beatrix Esmond, daughter of a viscount, and the devotion he exhibits to the idol of his heart and his imagination is something extraordinary even in comparison with the loves of other heroes. Beatrix, however, was unworthy of it: homage she would receive, true passion she seemed incapable of returning. Self-willed to a degree, the noble nature of such a man as Esmond was as a sealed book to her. His gravest feelings she treated with levity, and at length her conduct with the Pretender broke the spell, and threw down from its lofty pedestal, once and for ever, the idol he had set up. Like the marble it was beautiful to the eye; like the marble it was cold and insensible to the touch. Finally Esmond contracts a union with Beatrix's mother, Lady Castlewood, still handsome and comparatively young, and who had always cherished the memory of Esmond as one whom she dearly loved in his youth. Her affection for him had never waned. The volume closes with their settlement on the banks

of the Potomac, in a calm and serene happiness. The autobiographer, in describing their Virginian estate and Transatlantic life, says :—'Our diamonds are turned into ploughs and axes for 'our plantations, and into negroes, the happiest and merriest, I 'think, in all this country; and the only jewel by which my 'wife sets any store, and from which she hath never parted, is 'that gold button she took from my arm on the day when she 'visited me in prison, and which she wore ever after, as she told 'me, on the tenderest heart in the world.' In reading 'Esmond,' so cleverly is the story told, and with such ease and truthfulness, that the reader does not stay to note what a difficult task the novelist has set himself in venturing to deal with a plot more than commonly unattractive. Thackeray, however, is nowhere the slave of a plot; and in sometimes deliberately fighting against conventional construction and probability, he has proved by his success in enlisting interest and sympathy that he wielded the pen of a master. The world can forgive its hero for not doing what ninety-nine heroes in a hundred perform, when his history is related with the fidelity and ability which distinguish 'Esmond.' There are more characters carefully and vividly drawn in this book than are to be found in the entire novels of many popular writers; and that pungency of Thackeray's pen which cuts through individualities as sharply and clearly as the diamond cuts through the glass, is here in full operation. It was as superior to its predecessor as the latter was to almost all the novels of the time. In regard to historical portraiture it has never been excelled; to read it once is to be struck with its eloquence and power; to read it a second time is to be impressed with its fidelity and photographic accuracy.

Thackeray rose to the perfection of his art in fiction in 'The Newcomes;' and it is such books as this which show us what a fine teacher and instructor the novel may become in the hands of genius. In the representation of human nature this story is worthy of Richardson or Fielding. It is the *chef d'œuvre*, in our opinion, of its author. There is not lacking that infinite sarcasm observable in previous works, but the writer has touched more deeply the springs of human sympathy. Within the whole scope of fiction there is no single character which stands out more nobly for the admiration of readers to all time than that of Colonel Newcome. The painter of that portrait alone might well lay claim to an undying canvas. As faithfully and as naturally as though limned by the hand of Sir Joshua Reynolds himself the features of the old soldier appear before us. Having written 'The Newcomes' Thackeray may

be said to have shaken hands as an equal with the two or three great masters of fiction. If it be the province of the novelist to depict human nature as it is, it must be conceded, at any rate, that there was nothing else left for the author to do to entitle him to the highest honours of his class. Nor is it a little singular too that in the story just mentioned Thackeray has given us the best female character which has proceeded from his fertile brain,—Ethel Newcome. She comes to us as the sweet teacher of more goodness and religion than a whole company of preachers. We are inclined to agree with her cousin Clive Newcome that to look into her eyes would be almost too much for such unworthy imperfect creatures as men, and that she is one of that rare class of beings sent into the world occasionally to tell us that Heaven has not altogether forgotten us. What a story of society 'The Newcomes' is! First we have the Newcome family, with Sophia Alethea, whose mission and self-imposed duty it was 'to attend to the interests of the enslaved negro; to 'awaken the benighted Hottentot to a sense of the truth; 'to convert Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Papists; to arouse the 'indifferent and often blasphemous mariner; to guide the 'washerwoman in the right way; to head all the public chari-'ties of her sect; and do a thousand secret kindnesses that 'none knew of; to answer myriads of letters, pension endless 'ministers, and supply their teeming wives with continuous 'baby linen,'—all which she did 'womanfully' for nigh four-score years. Then we have the Honeymans, with the singular story of the Rev. Charles. Clive Newcome's uncles occupy a large portion of the narrative, and Sir Barnes Newcome appears and contrives to earn our unmitigated contempt. Grey Friars looms into view, with the hero Clive at school within its precincts. Good James Binnie is introduced, and honest J. J. Ridley. Electioneering contests, with all their humour, are portrayed, while the scheming members of society are also flayed for their snobbery. From the heartlessness of vampires and fools—the Floracs, the Kews, &c.,—we are pleased to hurry away and to light upon such passages of sweetness and beauty as this, where the Colonel on his arrival in England from India is welcomed by his little niece Ethel:—

'He took a little slim white hand and laid it down on his brown palm, where it looked all the whiter; he cleared the grizzled moustachio from his mouth, and stooping down he kissed the little white hand with a great deal of grace and dignity. There was no point of resemblance, and yet a something in the girl's look, voice, and movements, which caused his heart to thrill, and an image out of the past

to rise up and salute him. The eyes which had brightened his youth (and which he saw in his dreams and thoughts for faithful years afterwards as though they looked at him out of heaven) seemed to shine upon him after five and thirty years. He remembered such a fair bending neck and clustering hair, such a light foot and airy figure, such a slim hand lying in his own—and now parted from it with a gap of ten thousand long days between. . . . Parting is death, at least as far as life is concerned. A passion comes to an end; it is carried off in a coffin, or weeping in a post-chaise; it drops out of life one way or other, and the earth clods close over it, and we see it no more. But it has been part of our souls and it is eternal. Does a mother not love her dead infant? a man his lost mistress? with the fond wife nestling at his side,—yes, with twenty children smiling round her knee. No doubt, as the old soldier held the girl's hand in his, the little talisman led him back to Hades, and he saw Leonora.'

The book has its love passages—in some cases sad and miserable. Chapters of pathetic interest abound, where the world is exhibited at its old tricks of topsy-turvy—Lady Clara loving Jack Belsize and being beloved madly in return, while her hand is sold to Sir Barnes Newcome, 'society,' forsooth, blessing the bargain. Clive married to Rosey Mackenzie, whom he loves in a way, though his real devotion belongs to his cousin, who is put into the matrimonial auction and knocked down to an idiotic member of the peerage. As for the marriages which 'have been arranged,' who has not heard uttered, as our satirist asks, 'the ancient words, "I '"promise to take thee," &c., knowing them to be untrue; 'and is there a bishop on the bench that has not Amen'd the 'humbug in his lawn sleeves, and called a blessing over the 'kneeling pair of perjurers?' Hypocrisy and humbug are succeeded by disaster in the novel. The grand old Colonel is ruined by the failure of the celebrated Bundelcund Bank, but when there comes in his need a cheque from one whom he had helped in days gone by, the bankrupt Colonel only exclaims, 'I thank my God Almighty for this!' and passes on the cheque immediately to another sufferer. The story rapidly progresses. The death of Colonel Newcome is told with a pathos almost unequalled, and dear old Grey Friars becomes once more the witness of a scene to be ever held in remembrance. After this sad incident the novel speedily ends, with the united happiness of the two children whom the Colonel had most dearly loved. It is one of the few books which we close with regret when we have finished them. Genial, generous, and noble in its sentiments, we seem almost to touch the mind of Thackeray while perusing it. It gives us full assurance that his mission was of far wider import than that of

a mere scourger of society. It is evidently written by a man who loves the world, though he hates its follies. He has scorn for its dissimulation, indignation for its oppression, smiles for its happiness, and tears for its woes.

In continuation of his previous novel 'Esmond,' Thackeray returned to the historical vein in 'The Virginians,' which follows the fortunes of the Esmond family after its migration to America. It was one of his characteristics that the creations of his art acquired so complete a reality that he could not part from them, and they continued, as it were, to live on, and reappeared in his later works long after the fiction which had given birth to them had come to a close. Thus his 'Virginians' grew out of 'Esmond,' and it is one of the pleasantest of his works. The course of true love pursues a devious way, and the follies of one character serve to set in bold relief the heroism of others. The fairer sex have no reason to complain of the treatment they receive at the hands of our author, and in this story two of their species are immortalised in a setting for which we shall be for ever grateful. But while we are interested in much love we are also admonished by much morality, though the moralising of Thackeray on all occasions is anything but offensive. He has the gift of so exhibiting foibles and weaknesses that there is no need for him to lash himself into a furious state of indignation, as the manner of some is; that calm, sneering smile is sufficiently effectual; heavy, clumsy weapons or bludgeons may make much demonstration, but it is the light, piercing touch of the pointed steel which is the most dangerous. Thackeray manages to find the one vulnerable point in our armour; he introduces the rapier of his sarcasm, and we are slain. There is no withstanding his weapon. Surely the world should be the better for the fearless work which this man accomplished! Honestly has he besought it to discard its deceit and selfishness, and who knows but vast results have followed the teaching of the life-long lesson? Does he not ask us, brother man, to be more true to ourselves, to our own nature; to drop the cloak which we perpetually wear when we step forth into the world? He would have man walk abroad upright, strong in his own virtue, and not ashamed to meet his fellows, as though in the great game of life he was determined to revoke through every trick in order to seize upon the stakes. And is it so very inhuman to help a friend or a brother that it has become so uncommon? Are the heavens always to appear as brass when the cry for help is raised? Harry Esmond Warrington 'in his distress asked 'help from his relations; his aunt sent him a tract and her

'blessing; his uncle had business out of town, and could not, 'of course, answer the poor boy's petition. . . . My Lord and 'Lady Skinflint, when they consult in their bedroom about 'giving their luckless nephew a helping hand, and determine 'to refuse, and go down to family prayers and meet their 'children and domestics, and discourse virtuously before them 'and then remain together and talk nose to nose—what can 'they think of one another? and of the poor kinsman fallen 'among thieves and groaning for help unheeded? How can 'they go on with those virtuous airs? How can they dare look 'each other in the face?' Brave writer! these are manly words, but the world in great part still practises the selfish principle. It takes a long time to make it understand that a religious tract, though possibly very cheap, is not very filling to the hungry stomach, nor does it go far in clothing the shivering limbs. Cropping up here and there in his sparkling leaves, such are the lessons Thackeray would teach. In novels like 'The 'Virginians' they are subordinate to the more leading purposes of the story, but human nature has changed little since the period when its scenes were fixed. Graphic pictures of American scenery abound in its pages, and celebrated characters of the reign of George II. appear on the stage. The philosophy of the novel may not be profound, but it is always plain and unmistakeable. If there be any failure perceptible, it is a failure possessed in common with the greatest writers and dramatists, who, in attempting to depict the men, the morals, and the manners of a preceding age, have never been able entirely to get rid of their own.

The remaining works of fiction produced subsequently to 'The Virginians' are somewhat slight in their construction (with the exception of one to be named), but generally exhibit great power. The exception, as regards length and plot, is 'The Adventures of Philip,' a work worthy almost to take rank with any of those which are more widely known, on account of its extremely realistic pictures of life, and its depth of human interest. In the sketches of those 'who 'robbed Philip, those who helped him, and those who passed 'him by,' we come upon varieties of love, passion, and duplicity drawn with wondrous skill. The sad parts of the story are written with indelible ink, and all through that fine nervous sensibility which should distinguish the highest novelists is strikingly apparent. The same remark applies to that beautiful story of the 'Hoggarty Diamond.' Of the memoirs of that extraordinary youth Barry Lyndon, it is scarcely necessary to say more than that they are told with no diminu-

tion of vigour; all the later short stories of Thackeray, in fact, are written in English noticeable for its simplicity and purity. The wine is not so tart, does not sparkle quite so much, but it is mellower and there is greater body in it. What could more conclusively exhibit this than the story the author left unfinished, 'Denis Duval'? Here we have the last lines he ever wrote—lines which triumphantly dispose of the taunt that Thackeray was writing himself out. Of few can it be said that their later works exhibit a strength and genius undimmed by time. Yet Thackeray was one of these. The period of decadence had not set in with him. He had only just reached the top of the hill, he had taken no steps on his descent. To his powers of perception, and his possession of the critical faculty in no small degree, 'The Roundabout 'Papers,' the inimitable Paris, Irish, and Eastern Sketches, and his imitations of contemporary authors, bear ample testimony; while 'The Snob Papers,' burlesques and ballads, overflow with comic humour. As regards the authorship of ballads alone, we have no writer of *vers de société* at the present time who could be put into competition with him. 'Pleaseman X.' is famous; yet even Praed or Father Prout can show nothing better than 'Peg of Limavaddy,' 'At the Church Gate,' and 'Little Billee.' Novel, sketch, ballad, or essay, Thackeray has summed up in great part the lessons he would inculcate in verses which will be within recollection:—

'O, Vanity of Vanities!
How wayward the decrees of Fate are;
How very weak the very wise,
How very small the very great are!

'Though thrice a thousand years are past,
Since David's son the sad and splendid,
The weary King Ecclesiast,
Upon his awful tablets penned it,—

'Methinks the text is never stale,
And life is every day renewing
Fresh comments on the old, old tale,
Of Folly, Fortune, Glory, Ruin.'

In noticing the various works of Thackeray thus briefly, we have purposely left the lectures on the Four Georges and the English Humourists till the close, as they belong to a new and entirely distinct class of effort. Probably this was the first occasion on which a writer assumed the lecturer and the critic in one. Those who were privileged to hear the author deliver his lectures in person will remember how he took the town by storm, and the same enthusiasm was manifested

when Thackeray came to Edinburgh and visited the principal towns in England and America, where the whole of the intellectual classes of the population flocked to hear him. To hear the opinions of a well-known literary man on his distinguished predecessors delivered *vivâ voce* was naturally attractive, and the imposing form of Titmarsh with his snowy hair has not yet passed out of the recollection of his auditors. We heard him on the age in which he was thoroughly at home. He had made that period in a manner his own by an intimate knowledge of all its leading spirits, and he appeared to strike a chord of self-satisfaction when he said, 'I knew familiarly a 'lady who had been asked in marriage by Horace Walpole, 'who had been patted on the head by George I.' This immediately takes him to the time of Johnson, Goldsmith, Steele, Pope, and Swift, and he is happy. He then goes on to talk pleasantly of the times and manners of the Four Georges, not sparing the gall of satire, however, when he deems it necessary to mix it with his ink. As a citizen of the time he thus describes the advent of the First George, and the facts of history but too fully justify the sweeping condemnation.

'Here we are, all on our knees. Here is the Archbishop of Canterbury prostrating himself to the head of his church, with Kielmansegge and Schulenberg with their ruddled cheeks grinning behind the Defender of the Faith. Here is my Lord Duke of Marlborough kneeling, too, the greatest warrior of all times; he who betrayed King William—betrayed King James I.—betrayed Queen Anne—betrayed England to the French, the Elector to the Pretender, the Pretender to the Elector; there are my Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke, the latter of whom has just tripped up the heels of the former; and if a month's more time had been allowed him, would have had King James at Westminster.'

But foolish as the foreign gentleman was, he was astute enough to see through loyalty of this description. The bargain with England was that she wanted a Protestant puppet, and as George was not unwilling, for a consideration, matters were arranged. Though not without his faults, George I. had, as Thackeray points out, the countervailing virtues of justice, courage, and moderation. In introducing his immediate successor, the essayist sketches a memorable scene. An eager messenger in jack boots, who had ridden from London, forced his way into a bed-room in Richmond Lodge, where the master was taking a nap after dinner. With a strong German accent and many oaths, the man on the bed, starting up, asked who dared to disturb him? 'I am Sir 'Robert Walpole,' said the messenger. The awakened sleeper

hated Sir Robert. 'I have the honour to announce to your 'Majesty, that your royal father, King George I., died at 'Osnaburg, on Saturday last, the 10th instant.' '*Dat is one 'big lie!*' roared out his Sacred Majesty King George II., but that was how he came to be monarch nevertheless. The Second George was more wrongheaded than his father, and England was saved during many years of his reign by the strong will of that strange mixture of courage, dissoluteness, statesmanship, and meanness, Sir Robert Walpole, and by the good sense and tact of Queen Caroline. Brave the King undoubtedly was, but in and round his court there was the old sickly air of corruption, fed rather than suppressed by a sycophant clergy. The trenchant words of the great satirist are not a whit too strong in which to describe the godlessness and hypocrisy of the period. And when the sovereign died, some of the divines carried their cant behind the grave, and referred to their master as one too good for earth. They had crawled in the dust before his mistresses for preferment, and having got it, must of course pay for it somehow. Diving beneath the surface of society, Thackeray wisely says, 'It is to the 'middle class we must look for the safety of England; the 'working educated men, away from Lord North's bribery in 'the senate; the good clergy not corrupted into parasites by 'the hope of preferment; the tradesmen rising into manly 'opulence; the painters pursuing their gentle calling; the 'men of letters in their quiet studies; these are the men 'whom we love and like to read of in the last age.' With these classes pure and sound, kings and puppets may sport with impunity; the kingdom is safe; it is when the middle classes are corrupt and worthless that the foundations of society begin to break up. Pleasant gossip of the good but obstinate King George, the third of his name, is vouchsafed to us, with glimpses of his pure court—would it had always been so—within whose precincts many a battle was won over his opponents by the dogged monarch. Then we come to the period of his terrible malady, and in describing the closing scene of all, the essayist breaks out into a passage of touching eloquence, which we transcribe here as being in his most successful vein:—

'What preacher need moralise on this story; what words save the simplest are requisite to tell it? It is too terrible for tears. The thought of such a misery smites me down in submission before the Ruler of kings and men, the Monarch Supreme over empires and republics, the inscrutable Dispenser of life, death, happiness, victory. "O, brothers!" I said to those who heard me first in America—"O,

"brothers! speaking the same mother tongue—O comrades! enemies "no more, let us take a mournful hand together as we stand by this "royal corpse, and call a truce to battle! Low he lies to whom the "proudest used to kneel once, and who was cast lower than the "poorest; dead, whom millions prayed for in vain." Driven off the throne; buffeted by rude hands; with his children in revolt; the darling of his old age killed before him untimely; our Lear hangs over her breathless lips and cries: "Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a "little!"

> '"Vex not his ghost—oh! let him pass—he hates him
> That would upon the rack of this tough world
> Stretch him out longer!"

'Hush! strife and quarrel, over the solemn grave! Sound, trumpets, a mournful march. Fall, dark curtain, upon his pageant, his pride, his grief, his awful tragedy.'

The lectures on the English Humourists, a subject peculiarly adapted to the bent of Thackeray, commence with Swift, the genius who had a life-hunt for a bishopric and missed it. The bitterness of a generation of mankind seemed to be concentrated in that one spirit. We scarcely understand him now, or if we do, then genius is miserably weak and vulnerable in some point if strong as adamant in others. He did not succeed, and it was his constant habit, we are assured, to keep his birthday as a day of mourning. Yet there are some aspects in which we like to regard him. We like his utter scorn at times, his contempt for the tinsel, and the power of his eagle eye to pierce to the heart of things. He could also crush pretence, at once and effectually. A bumptious young wit said to him in company, 'You must know, Mr. Dean, that I set up for a wit!' 'Do you 'so?' said the Dean. 'Take my advice and sit down again.' Thackeray mistrusts the religion of Swift, and mentions as one of the strongest reasons for doing so, the fact of his recommending the dissolute author of 'The Beggar's Opera' to turn clergyman, and look out for a seat on the bench. But this master of irony varied so in his moods, that it is impossible to know whether this advice was not simply the result of that intense chagrin which possessed him, rather than of a deliberate recklessness of the good. That Swift suffered, mentally, more than almost any man history takes note of may be accepted, but it was partly due to the workings of an 'evil spirit.' It is justly said of him that 'he goes through life, tearing, like a 'man possessed of a devil. Like Abudah in the Arabian story, 'he is always looking out for the Fury, and knows that the night 'will come and the inevitable hag with it. What a night, my 'God! it was, what a lonely rage of long agony—what a vulture 'that tore the heart of that giant! It is awful to think of the

'great sufferings of this great man. Through life he always 'seems alone, somehow. Goethe was so. I can't fancy Shaks-'peare otherwise. The giants must live apart. The kings 'can have no company. But this man suffered so; and deserved 'so to suffer. One hardly reads anywhere of such a pain.' And this pain went through life—in darkness, rage, and misery he spent his days; no light broke through the starless night. The end came, and terrible is the story,—the witty, the eloquent, the gifted, the godlike in intellect, the devilish in heart, Swift passed away in a state not unlike that against which he had prayed in a letter to Bolingbroke, when he said, 'It is 'time for me to have done with the world, and so I would if I 'could get into a better before I was called into the best, and 'not die here in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a hole.' Pleasant gossip follows this sketch—gossip of Congreve and Addison, with wise critical remarks interspersed by the author, who may be said to have established a prescriptive right to the age of which he wrote. Somewhat too much, we are inclined to think, Thackeray made of Pope, though the executive ability of the young poet was of the most marvellous description. Poor Dick Steele, that bundle of failings and weaknesses, has a paper all to himself, and we rise from its perusal with our love for the kindly miserable sinner intensified. It was surface wickedness with Steele entirely: his heart was tender, and his character simple as a child's. For the genius and character of Fielding Thackeray had of course the highest admiration. Very few lines need be read before it is apparent that the modern novelist had studied his predecessor minutely. He quotes Gibbon's famous saying about Fielding with intense relish. 'The suc-'cessors of Charles V. may disdain their brethren (the Fieldings) 'of England: but the romance of "Tom Jones," that exquisite 'picture of humour and manners, will outlive the palace of the 'Escurial, and the Imperial Eagle of Austria.' But here our pleasant reminiscences of the English humourists must end, and some observations of a general nature be made upon the genius of him who has bequeathed to us his thoughts and judgments on his illustrious predecessors.

The first characteristic which strikes the reader of Thackeray is unquestionably his humour. It does not gleam forth as flashes of lightning, rare and vivid, but is more like the ever-bubbling fountain, the perennial spring. It is a kind of permeating force throughout all his works, now lashed into sarcasm and anon dissolved in pathos. It is one of the great mistakes regarding this author that he is satirical and nothing else. No critic who thus represents him can have either studied his works or caught

the spirit and purpose of the man. He is one of the best of English humourists simply because his nature is sensitive at all points. What Carlyle has said of Jean Paul may be said of him. 'In his smile itself a touching pathos may lie hidden, a 'pity too deep for tears. He is a man of feeling, in the noblest 'sense of that word; for he loves all living with the heart of a 'brother; his soul rushes forth, in sympathy with gladness and 'sorrow, with goodness or grandeur, over all creation. Every 'gentle and generous affection, every thrill of mercy, every 'glow of nobleness, awakens in his bosom a response; nay, 'strikes his spirit into harmony.' It must ever be so. But when the first satirical papers of Thackeray were published the world had only seen one side of his humour. The Snob papers and burlesques, and the memoirs of Mr. Yellowplush, gave place in due time to a richer vein in more important works. The sparkling Champagne was followed, as it were, by the deep rich Burgundy. As Dickens was his superior in the faculty of invention, so was the former eclipsed by the greater depth of Thackeray's penetration. Truth to life distinguishes nearly all the characters of Dickens, those at least which belong to the lower classes; but this truth is the surface truth of caricature rather than of reality: Thackeray takes us below the surface; we travel through the dark scenes of the human comedy with him, he makes his notes and comments without flattery and with astounding realism, and when we part company from his side we wish human nature were somewhat nobler than it is. But his wit does not preclude him from being fair and just. He is ever scrupulously so, and to the erring kind and tender. It used to be said occasionally of his works as they appeared, 'Ah, there's the same old sneer'—so ready is the world to follow the course in which its attention is directed. Speaking of the maligners of Society, he says, 'You 'who have ever listened to village bells, or have walked to 'church as children on sunny Sabbath mornings; you who have 'ever seen the parson's wife tending the poor man's bedside; 'or the town clergyman threading the dirty stairs of noxious 'alleys upon his sacred business;—do not raise a shout when 'one of these falls away, or yell with the mob that howls after 'him.' Surely these are noble words to come from one whose intellectual current was set in the direction of contempt! With all his keen sense of the ridiculous and his scathing powers of invective, there is no one instance where for the sake of the brilliance of his satire he ever cast a slur upon truly philanthropic labour, or perilled his reputation for the worship of the pure and the good. If ever man's humour were useful to

instruct as well as to delight, it is that of Michael Angelo Titmarsh. When he laughs we know he will do it fairly—his eye wanders round all, and neither friend nor foe, if vulnerable, can keep out the arrows of his wit. His position, as a humourist, is certainly that of the equal of most of the wits of whom he has written, and one scarcely inferior to even Swift or Sterne.

A second quality that is observable in him is his fidelity. And to this we do not attach the restricted meaning that the persons of his novels are faithful to nature—though that they incontestably are—but the wide import of being true to the results of life as we see them daily. He does not allow the development of a story to destroy the unities of character, and in this respect he resembles the greatest of all writers. Take an example. At the close of 'The Newcomes,' instead of preserving alive the noble Colonel to witness the happiness of the family in its resuscitated fortunes, Thackeray causes him to die, and that in the humblest manner. With most novelists we could predict a very different ending, but one not so true as Thackeray has had the courage to adopt. Sorrow we may indulge that the death should thus occur, but we must acknowledge that it is more consonant with our daily experience than any other conclusion would have been, however pleasant as matter of fiction. The same thing is noticed in the character of Beatrix Esmond; we are first interested in her; then our faith is gradually shattered; and, finally, we are thoroughly disappointed by the catastrophe. The result is contrary to that which we expected; it is other than would have been given by most writers, but it is none the less true. Take the whole of his creations, let the test of fidelity be applied to each, and it will be found that the writers are very few indeed who have been so thoroughly able to disentangle themselves from the common method of adapting character to plot, or who have made their individualities so distinct, and kept them so to the end. To place him in comparison with other authors who are distinguished for their delineation of character as character—as witnessed at certain points or stages—is unfair both to him and to them. Conversations, with one, stamp individualities, and the test of their fidelity is the absence of contradiction in the outward forms of speech and action whenever the individuals are introduced: this was the life-painting of Dickens, for instance. With Thackeray the case is different. He does not depend so much on the conversational or descriptive recognition of character. He gives us more of their mind or heart than of their person. He does not

tell us what they look like, but what they are; and through all his novels they answer to the bent and the natural instincts we have been led to associate with them. It is this elevated form of fidelity that we would insist upon as pre-eminently to be noticed in Thackeray; and were it on this ground alone we should not hesitate to place him in the very first rank of novelists. In this essential particular, in truth, he has no rival. Others may excel him in various arts of fiction, but with this passport, even his superiors in minor detail will accord to him a perfect equality, if not a superiority, in the manifestation of the cardinal principle of novel-writing.

The subjectiveness of Thackeray is another quality which has greatly enhanced the value of his works. It is generally admitted that subjective writers have a more powerful influence over humanity than those of the class styled objective. It is natural, perhaps, that the external descriptions of circumstances or scenery should not move us nearly so much as the life-record of a breathing, suffering, rejoicing human being. Be his station what it may, we are interested in every individual of the species whose career is faithfully pictured. The author of 'Vanity Fair' is one of the few men who have been able to endue their characters with being and motion. When there were few writers who had either the courage or the gifts to be natural, Thackeray gave a new impetus to the world of fiction. So eminently subjective are his works, that those of his friends who knew him well are able to trace in them the successive stages of his personal career, and to show in what manner the incidents of his own life operated upon his novels. There are but few incidents in the whole series that were not drawn either from his personal history or the history of some one of his friends or acquaintances. This is, doubtless, one of the most influential causes of the reality of his stories. No stiff, formal record of events, dispassionately told, is to be witnessed. If the reader reads at all, he must perforce become interested in his work. There probably never were novels written in which there was so little exaggeration of colouring. His dear Harry Fielding has been his guide, but the author of 'Tom 'Jones' has been almost outstripped by his pupil. The latter has been able to throw away more effectually the folds of drapery in which character has generally been presented to us. In his model he was happy, for, previous to Thackeray, Fielding was the most subjective writer in the annals of fiction. One can understand the charm which those writings exercised over his successor, and the desire which he felt to construct his novels after the fashion of which he had become so greatly enamoured.

But the pupil has the greater claim to our regard in the fact that his work is such that not a line of it need be excised in public reading. He is Fielding purified. All the vivacity and the life-giving strokes which belonged to the pencil of the earlier master are reproduced in the younger, and the interest is also preserved intact. But with the later age has come the purer language, and Thackeray may be said to stand in precisely the same relation to the nineteenth century as Fielding stood to the eighteenth. The absence of exaggeration in Thackeray's drawing of character is very remarkable. Notwithstanding the multiplicity of his personages, there are not two which in any sense resemble each other. The faculty is very rare of being able to transfer the lineaments of common-place people in such a manner as that others will care to study them. Yet this is the result which Thackeray achieves, and without labour. Nothing transcendental, or that which is beyond human nature, is thrown in as a means of bribing the reader into closer acquaintanceship. As men passed Thackeray he observed them; as they interested him he drew them; but in doing so he felt that to add to the original would destroy the identity, and the consequence of his consummate art is that throughout the whole of his varied picture-gallery there is no portrait which bears the impress of falsity or distortion. To say the truth, and to describe what he saw before him, was always the novelist's own boast. There could be no nobler ambition for any writer, but there are few who have attained the perfect height of the standard.

Leading out of his subjectiveness, or rather being a broader and grander development of it, we come to the fourth great characteristic of Thackeray,—his humanity. That is the crown and glory of his work. And yet this man, who was sensitive almost beyond parallel, was charged with having no heart! Shallow critics, who gave a surface-reading to 'Vanity 'Fair,' imagined they had gauged the author, and in an off-hand manner described him as a man of no feeling—the cold simple cynic. It will be remembered that the same charge of having no heart was made against Macaulay; but its baselessness was discovered on his death, when it became known that 'the heartless' one had for years pursued a career of almost unexampled benevolence. So superficial are the judgments of the world! Against Thackeray the charge was doubly cruel; he was one of those men who are naturally full of sensibility to a degree. Those who understood him best know that it cost him an effort to subdue that part of his nature which hastened to sympathise with others. Selfishness was as

foreign to him as insincerity. The man was true as the light of heaven to the generous instincts of his nature. To veil at times this side of his character was essential in order to give play to that satire which kills. If his mission was to exalt the good and the pure, it was also as decidedly his mission to abase the false. To do this he must necessarily appear severe. But who that reads him well can fail to perceive that the eye accustomed to blaze with scorn could also moisten with sympathy and affection? What man without heart could have written such passages as that episode in the 'Hoggarty Dia-'mond'? Titmarsh is describing his journey to the Fleet Prison, accompanied by his wife:—

'There was a crowd of idlers round the door as I passed out of it, and had I been alone I should have been ashamed of seeing them; but, as it was, I was only thinking of my dear, dear wife, who was leaning trustfully on my arm, and smiling like heaven into my face—ay, and took heaven too into the Fleet Prison with me—or an angel out of heaven. Ah! I had loved her before, and happy it is to love when one is hopeful and young in the midst of smiles and sunshine; but be *un*happy, and then see what it is to be loved by a good woman! I declare before heaven, that of all the joys and happy moments it has given me, that was the crowning one—that little ride, with my wife's cheek on my shoulder, down Holborn to the prison! Do you think I cared for the bailiff that sat opposite? No, by the Lord! I kissed her and hugged her—yes, and cried with her likewise. But before our ride was over her eyes dried up, and she stepped blushing and happy out of the coach at the prison-door, as if she were a princess going to the Queen's drawing-room.'

Or is there to be found in all fiction a scene more pathetic than the one describing the death of Colonel Newcome? To have written that alone would have deservedly made any name great. Though it is doubtless familiar to every reader, it will be impossible to illustrate fully the human tenderness of the author without quoting some portion of it here. The scene is at Grey Friars:—

'Ethel came in with a scared face to our pale group. "He is "calling for you again, dear lady," she said, going up to Madame de Florac, who was still kneeling; "and just now he said he wanted "Pendennis to take care of his boy. He will not know you." She hid her tears as she spoke. She went into the room where Clive was at the bed's foot; the old man within it talked on rapidly for a while; then again he would sigh and be still; once more I heard him say hurriedly: "Take care of him when I'm in India;" and then with a heart-rending voice he called out, "Léonore, Léonore!" She was kneeling by his side now. The patient's voice sank into faint murmurs; only a moan now and then announced that he was not

asleep. At the usual evening hour the chapel bell began to toll, and Thomas Newcome's hands outside the bed feebly beat time. And just as the last bell struck, a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face, and he lifted up his head a little, and quickly said, "Adsum!" and fell back. It was the word we used at school when names were called; and lo! he, whose heart was as that of a little child, had answered to his name and stood in the presence of The Master.'

The principal defect alleged against Thackeray is that he is a mannerist. But when it is considered that the same charge could be laid against every writer in the roll of literature with the exception of the few imperial intellects of the universe, it must be conceded that the charge is of little moment. All men, save the Homers, Shakspeares, and Goethes of the world, are mannerists. There is not a writer of eminence living at the present day who is not a mannerist. Tennyson, Browning, and Carlyle are all mannerists. It is impossible to quarrel with that which sets the stamp of individuality and originality on the literary productions of the intellect.

To assign Thackeray's ultimate position in literature is a difficult task, for nothing is less certain than the permanence of literary attractiveness and fame; but we think that his works will be read and as keenly enjoyed after the lapse of a century as they are now. Fielding has survived longer than that period, and weightier reasons for immortality than could be advanced in his case might be advanced in favour of Thackeray. If his works ceased to be read as pictures of society and delineations of character, they would still retain no inglorious place in English literature from the singular purity and beauty of their style. It is style even more than matter which embalms a literary reputation. To the faithfulness with which he spake the English tongue we believe future generations will testify. Whatsoever was good, honest, and true found in him a defender; whatsoever was base, unmanly, or false shrank abashed in his presence. A man with less pretence, less assumption, less sham never existed: he revolted from appearing that which he was not. His works were the reflex of the man, and like a shaft of light, which, while it pierces into the deepest recesses of dissimulation and vice, smiles benignantly upon those aspirations and feelings which are the noblest glory of humanity.

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Cassandra, barque, of Liverpool........................ 21
Champion, brig, of Shoreham—saved vessel and crew 8
Charles Philip, smack—assisted to save vessel and crew 3
Confidence, schr., of Aberystwith 2
Cornhill, brigantine, of Dungarvan 8
Courier, schooner, of Lerwick—rendered assistance.
Cynthia, schr., of Montrose... 2
Cyrus, brigantine, of Rye 9
Dania, Danish schooner....... 5
Demitian Lass, smack, of the Isle of Skye 4
Dispatch, schooner, of Whitby . 3
Echo, brigantine, of Maldon... 6
Echo, lugger, of Lowestoft—saved vessel.
Eleanor, schooner, of Newquay—assisted to save vessel and 4
Eliza, schooner, of Pwllheli—rendered assistance.
Elizabeth and Cicely, brig, of Guernsey................... 8
Equestrian, ketch, of Port Gordon—saved vessel and crew . 4
Excel, sch.—rendered aid.
Fleetwood, a man overtaken by the tide at 1
Flora, brig, of Poole 6
Francis, schooner, of Cardigan—saved vessel and crew 4
Friend's Increase, barge, of London.................... 4
Friendship, galliot, of Goole .. 3
Halswell, of Bridgwater, and *J. W. A.*, of Newquay, schrs. 10
Handy, schooner, of Wexford.. 5
Hattie, yacht, of Cromer 3
Hope, brig, of Portsmouth—remained by vessel.
Hopeman & Skye fishing-boats 11
Howth—dredging-barge 4
Idun, barque, of Bergen 16
India, barque, of Shields...... 16
Intrepid, schooner, of Liverpool—rendered assistance.
Isabella Heron, brigantine, of Blyth—saved vessel and crew 6
Jane, brigantine, of Barmouth 5
Jane Kilgour, barque, of London 13
Jeune Colombe, brig, of St. Malo 7
Jubilee, schooner, of Preston .. 4
Kingsbridge Packet, steamer—rendered assistance.
Lady Huntley, brigantine, of Maryport 4
Lark, smack, of Wexford...... 2
Launceston, barque, of Shields. 14
Lucie Antoinette, schooner, of Nantes 5
Lynmouth packet-boat 1
Margaret, brigantine, of Lancaster 25
Major, schooner, of Lynn 4
Maria, ship, of Dunedin 19
Martha, barque, of Arendal ... 15
Mary, schooner, of Shields.... 4
Mersey, schooner, of Liverpool. 4
Mexican, barque, of St. John's, N.B.—rendered assistance.
Morning Star, brig, of Dublin.. 6
Musselburgh, dandy, of Lowestoft...................... 11
Newbiggin fishing-cobles—assisted to save seven boats.
Nigretta, brigantine, of New York 7
Norval, brigantine, of Seaham—assisted to save vessel and. 7
Orb, b., of Whitby—saved vessel & 7
Osborne, brig, of Hartlepool ... 8
Oxalis, schooner, of Macduff... 4
Paquita, barque, of Santander—assisted to save vessel and 16
Pausilippo, schr., of Ramsey .. 5
Pierre Désirée, schr., of St. Valerie—saved vessel and crew 4
Pomona, brigantine, of Dundalk—saved vessel and crew 5
Queen, brigantine, of Youghal . 6
R.B., schooner, of Bayonne ... 7
Rapid, schooner, of Preston—saved vessel and crew....... 2
Regina, brig, of London 7
Richard and Harriet, barque .. 7
River Nith, ship, of Liverpool—rendered assistance.
Robina, barque, of North Shields 17
Roscius, brigantine, of Belfast—saved vessel.
Rose, schooner, of Ipswich—saved vessel and crew 4
Samuel and Ann, schooner, of Great Yarmouth 4
Sarah, brig, of Sunderland 6
Scarborough fishing-cobles—assisted four boats.
Sea, barque, of Montrose—assisted to save vessel.
Sori, Austrian brig—assisted to save vessel.
St. Fergus, schooner, of Aberystwith—remained by vessel.
St. Thomas's Packet, of Blyth—assisted to save vessel and... 4
Storm, barque, of Cardiff—remained by vessel.
Stranger, schooner, of Newfoundland 3
Temperance Star, *Margaret*, and *6 H's*, fishing-cobles—assisted vessels.
Teviotdale, barque, of North Shields—remained by vessel.
Thessalia, brig, of Whitby 9
Three Sisters, barque, of Genoa. 6
Times, barque, of Liverpool.... 17
Trafalgar, sloop, of Cley—saved vessel and crew 2
Trioner, brig, of Arendal...... 9
Typhon, brig, of Tvedestrand, Norway—saved vessel and .. 8
Vale of Conway, smack, of Beaumaris................. 3
Valiant, brig, of Jersey........ 7
Venus, schooner, of Preston—remained alongside.
Wanderer, brig, of Maryport... 10
Whitby fishing-cobles 13
William, brigantine, of Londonderry 5
William, schooner, of Liverpool—saved vessel and crew..... 3
Windsor, brig, of Lynn........ 6
Zoe, brigantine, of Dundalk—remained by vessel.

Total lives saved by Life-boats, in 1871, in addition to 31 vessels 658
During the same period the Institution granted rewards for saving Lives by fishing and other boats 224

Total of Lives saved in Twelve Months.. } 882

THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT have to state that during the past year (1871) the ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION expended **£21,653** on various Life-boat Establishments on the Coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, in addition to having contributed to the saving of **882** persons from various Shipwrecks on our Coasts, for which services it granted **19** Silver Medals and Votes of Thanks on Vellum, and pecuniary rewards to the amount of **£2,802**.

The number of Lives saved either by the Life-boats of the Society, or by special exertions, for which it has granted Rewards, since its formation, is **21,076**; for which Services **91** Gold Medals, **829** Silver Medals, and **£37,814** in cash have been paid in Rewards.

The expense of a Life-boat, its equipment, transporting-carriage, and boat-house, averages **£700**, in addition to **£70** a-year needed to keep the establishment in a state of efficiency.

Donations and *Annual Subscriptions* are earnestly solicited, and will be thankfully received by the Bankers of the Institution, Messrs. WILLIS, PERCIVAL, and Co., 76 Lombard Street; by all the other Bankers in the United Kingdom; and by the Secretary, RICHARD LEWIS, Esq., at the Institution, 14 JOHN STREET, ADELPHI, London, W.C.—*November*, 1872.

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OF

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1871.

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4. Consecration of the Sacrament.
5. The effects of Consecration.
6. Transubstantiation: change of the substance of the elements.
7. Transubstantiation: whole Christ under the species.
8. Consubstantiation; and the nineteenth century doctrine of the Real Objective Presence.
9. The literal interpretation demanded by the teachers of the Real Presence, but mistaken by them.
10. The literal interpretation vindicated.
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12. Our Lord gave His body broken, and His blood shed. He gave not nor promised His glorified body. No presence of that which He did give, and no presence of that which He did not promise, to be expected.
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4. Definition of Sacrifice.
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6. Opinions of the Ancient Fathers on Melchisedek's alleged sacrifice.
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8. On the alleged sacrifice of the 'Sacramentum' with the 'Res Sacramenti.'
9. The true Eucharistic Sacrifice.
10. On oblations in the Holy Communion.
11. Conclusion.

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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS—*continued.*

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From the Art Journal of September, 1872.

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W. R. M'PHUN & SON, Publishers, Glasgow and London.

MILNER'S "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY."

From the Evening Citizen of 14th May, 1872.

THE splendid work known under this title has recently become the property of our townsmen Messrs W. R. M'Phun & Son. It was originally owned by Messrs Chambers, and formed part of their great series of publications; but the territorial changes in Europe consequent on the recent wars, as well as the altered political features in other parts of the world, rendered it, in some respects, out of date. Messrs M'Phun, accordingly, put themselves in communication with its author, the Rev. Thomas Milner, M.A., and the result is a new edition, under their auspices, greatly extended, and with all facts brought up to the present year. From a rapid glance at the two handsome volumes in which the work is now issued, it is evident that Mr Milner has executed his task with rare diligence, the entirely new matter, apart from the numerous emendations, extending to some 200 pages. The "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY," as it now stands, presents, in brilliant succession, delineations of the natural and political divisions of the globe, together with everything that is remarkable in their climate, scenery, architecture, language, and national characteristics. The whole forms, in fact, a grand pictorial and descriptive Tour of the World, profusely and beautifully illustrated, the maps and "nationalities" being coloured. Such a book should be in the hands of both young and old, abounding as it does in information concerning all countries and peoples—information geographically and statistically exact, yet set forth in the most popular and attractive forms, and supplying the place, so to speak, of a score of illustrated books of travel.

From the Leeds Mercury of 22nd August, 1872.

THERE is, perhaps, no subject in which all classes of readers are more generally interested than in the record of geographical discovery and research, the descriptions of far-distant countries, and the manners and customs of their inhabiting people. Whatever other branches of literature we cultivate or neglect, these matters, or some portion of them, rarely fail to obtain a larger or smaller share of our attention. Nor is the charm they usually exercise confined, as a rule, to any period of life. While in the days of our boyhood we revel with delight in the scenes painted in Captain Cook's Voyages and the Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, a maturer age finds us taking an equal, if a more subdued pleasure in the journeyings of a Huc, the wanderings of a Burton, or the explorations of a Livingstone. And to our mind there is something very natural and human in all this; for, with the same feelings of sympathy and curiosity pervading the whole of mankind, it would be a strange thing if we failed to take a warm and lasting interest in all that concerns our common humanity. Nor is our attention to these subjects to be regarded as one of pleasure merely, and not also of profit. For how can we know our nature as it really is, unless, following it into its most distant ramifications, and stripping it of its non-essential accessories, we see how it bears itself amid the endless changes of its conditions? Hence, so far as they enable us to do this, books of travel, geographical descriptions, and the like, if faithfully and carefully prepared, are calculated at once to satisfy a very natural appetite, and supply materials from which lessons of the highest moment may be learned. But if this be true with regard to them, it is much more so with regard to such a valuable and comprehensive work as the splendid volumes before us. For here we have the sum and substance, the pith and marrow, of the travel and discovery, the exploration and research of all ages, from the commencement of the historic to the present period; every country and every people, both as they are and as they have been, being marshalled before us in orderly array, and delineated as boldly and as graphically as the highest efforts of pen and

pencil combined have been able to effect. Nothing, indeed, has been left undone, either by the enterprising publishers or the painstaking author, to make the work, not merely in name, but in fact, a "Gallery of Geography." And in this, we feel bound to say, they have been successful. Purchasing the copyright of Messrs Chambers, who were the original publishers, Messrs M'Phun & Son have evidently spared no expense in having it thoroughly and completely revised, and in having the maps, plates, &c., made accurately representative of the present state of geographical knowledge. On the other hand, at the cost of much labour that must have been anything but easy, the author has everywhere kept himself *au courant* with the extensions which geographical science has received within the last few years, and has duly incorporated them in their proper places. An entirely new section on Mathematical and Physical Geography has been added, as well as a number of coloured illustrations of costumes distinctive of different nationalities. "With general descriptions of the surface in various regions—their mountains, valleys, plains, lakes, and rivers—special notices are blended of what is prominently important or rare, grand or picturesque in their scenery. Climate is not only considered in its varying nature and interesting phenomena, but in its bearing upon the character and habits of nations." "Vegetable forms are treated of, especially when of value as objects of commerce, or remarkable for their peculiar properties or floral beauty." The successive stages by which the principal States have advanced, with the great epochs in their history are defined; and the various industries by which they are distinguished are indicated, whether commercial, manufacturing, mining, agricultural, or pastoral." "In the countries of antiquity, as well as those of later times, the localities famous for deeds of patriotism or valour, or for events which have influenced the destiny of empires, are characterised, as well as the natural and social changes which have subsequently transpired."

In illustration and confirmation of these statements, which, though taken from the preface to the work itself, are by no means exaggerated, we subjoin a brief outline of the section devoted to the great continent of America.

First, there is a general description of its extent, contour, and physical features, including the height, distribution, and physiognomy of its mountains, both ordinary and volcanic; the source, course, and termination of its mighty rivers; the extent and character of its great lakes; its natural productions, mineral, vegetable, and animal; its woods and prairies; and the distinguishing features of its various populations.

Secondly, we have a special description of each of its political divisions, from Danish America on the north, to Patagonia, the Fuegian Archipelago, and the Falkland Islands on the south. In this part are included all the details as to population, mode of Government, trade, commerce, manufactures, &c., which would have been out of place in the general description, but whose importance rendered their omission altogether impossible.

Thirdly, there are notices of all the great towns, &c.

Throughout the text is profusely illustrated with wood engravings of some of the most renowned and remarkable objects and scenery both of the Old World and of the New, the majority of which are taken from photographs and original sketches. The style is everywhere clear, vivid, and graphic, and the language truthful and accurate; so that while the volumes are as attractive as a novel, they produce such mental pictures of the different regions of the world as cannot fail to be as permanent as they are faithful. As a work of reference, a companion for hours of leisure, and a text-book for students preparing for examinations in geography, it will be invaluable, and as such it is sure to meet with a large circle of appreciative readers.

MILNER'S "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY."

From the North British Daily Mail of August, 1872.

NOTHING more satisfactorily indicates the increased value attached nowadays to the study of geography than the quantity and quality of the publications which, during the last twenty years, have illustrated, and at the same time stimulated, research in this interesting science. When, some eight years ago, Messrs Chambers added to their larger series of educational works the "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY" by Mr Milner, it was at once recognised as a work of sterling merit, not a mere gazetteer to be shelved as a dictionary of reference, but a book which at any moment and on any page afforded an amount of instructive and interesting reading which mere books of reference cannot attain to, and was in every way deserving of success. The few years, however, which have elapsed since its publication, have wrought such changes in the map of Europe, and the results of recent travels have so largely increased or modified our geographical knowledge of various parts of the globe, that the work was, to some extent, out of date and no longer complete. Having been recently purchased by Messrs W. R. M'Phun & Son, its new proprietors resolved to submit it to thorough revision at the hands of the author, so as to bring out a fresh edition, largely extended, and with all its materials corrected and brought down to the present year. Every care has been taken to render this as complete as possible. An entirely new section has been devoted to Mathematical, and to Physical Geography, and these chapters are especially valuable. Mere geographical treatises, deficient in pictorial illustrations, however scientific and valuable they may be, seldom succeed in attracting any but the learned few, who treat them as books of reference. Nor are such works complete, and the numerous plates of scenery or remarkable geographical features which are found in books of travel, many of which have been transferred to the present work, materially increase its value from a scientific point of view, as well as its attractiveness to the general reader. The practical value of a work of this description is always materially enhanced by the quality of its index, the present one containing upwards of 7000 names of places, very few of importance being absent. In every department, historical, physical, and topographical, the work thoroughly deserves its title of a "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY," and merits great success.

From the Bookseller of 29th June, 1872.

SLIGHT examination will prove the correctness of the assertion that the author of these portly and handsome volumes has brought his information down to the present time. We turn to France and Germany, and we find all the territorial changes brought about by the late disastrous war correctly marked both in the maps and in the text; we open the book at other parts, and discover that the recent additions to our colonial empire, the dynastic changes in India, and the latest discoveries in Australia and the South Pacific are all distinctly referred to. We read a page or two of the text devoted to the British Isles, and we are surprised and gratified to see that the figures relating to the population, their dwellings and occupations, &c., have been uniformly corrected by the results of the recent census. We turn to the chapters descriptive of the Americans, and we note equal evidences of Mr Milner's diligent and careful revision; so that in fact, as it now stands, we may regard this as practically a new work. It is elegantly produced; illustrated with 370 engravings, among which are several coloured plates descriptive of the features and costumes of various races, with the addition of six steel engravings and twelve double-page maps printed in colours. No more complete book of its kind has hitherto been produced; and whether we regard it as an atlas or a geography, it is equally useful and attractive.

W. R. M'PHUN & SON, Publishers, Glasgow and London.

MILNER'S "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY."

From the London Illustrated Review of 15th July, 1872.

THESE two handsome volumes form one of the most useful as well as attractive works that have recently come under our notice. It was formerly the property of Messrs Chambers, and in its earlier form is, we doubt not, well known to most of our readers. To those not already in possession of this admirable treasury of geography in its various branches, we would observe that the present publishers have taken all the means in their power to render the new edition still worthier of the praise that was bestowed on the book when it first appeared. With this end in view they have had it carefully revised by Mr Milner, and have made large additions to the letter-press.

From the Daily Review of 29th July, 1872.

THERE is no one who does not wish to know something of the globe on which he lives, but it falls to the lot of only a few to gratify that wish by a personal visit to whatever is wonderful or interesting in its various regions. To those who cannot travel we do not know a better substitute, nor even one so good, as the two splendid volumes before us. They are truly named "A Pictorial and Descriptive Tour of the World," for they take the reader round the globe, and carefully point out by the way whatever can interest, instruct, or delight him. Does the reader want to know the political divisions of the world? These are here fully and accurately stated, and brought down to the latest period, including the alterations in Europe effected by the late war. Does the reader wish to know the character of the climate, the nature of the productions which clothe the soil, the more remarkable or the more useful of the vegetable products of the various countries? Or is it the picturesque and the grand in scenery that he is in search of? He has it all here. Is it illustrious cities or great historical sites that he loves to visit? This book will be his guide; it will conduct him to the spot, and give him all information about it. Does he wish to know the manners of the several nations, their costumes, their occupations and tastes, their language and character? He will find what he wishes here, all given in an interesting and popular style. The work before us is, no doubt, a work on geography, full, accurate, and concise; but it is a great deal more. It is a library of useful knowledge. It is a book of history, containing as it does a well-digested compend of antiquities, history, and the present position of the nations which occupy the several countries of the globe. It is a book of natural history, of commerce, of statistics, for it contains a prodigious mass of information on all these points. The returns of the populations have been brought down to the last censuses. The work before us is, moreover, a gallery of engravings. It contains some hundreds of beautiful illustrations, and as a guarantee of the general correctness of these engravings we may mention that they are taken from photographs and from original sketches. It has for further illustration numerous maps. An attractive feature of the present edition is the *coloured illustrations* of costume distinctive of the nationalities. These are very beautiful, and convey a vivid and truthful picture of the objects they are meant to represent. We must commend the enterprise of the publishers in issuing these volumes, so replete with useful information and so rich in pictorial representations. Nor less can we congratulate the author on the charm he has been able to throw round a subject which, however important, is usually dry. Vast labour he must have expended, but he has had the skill to throw that labour into an attractive and popular dress, without sacrificing an iota of its accuracy and practical utility. To all classes, we cordially recommend these volumes, assuring them that they will find in them much useful information, as well as general knowledge.

W. R. M'PHUN & SON, Publishers, Glasgow and London.

MILNER'S "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY."

From the Hull Packet and East Riding Times of 19th July, 1872.

IN these volumes Mr Milner has furnished a compendium of information even more valuable and acceptable than when, some years ago, his *Gallery of Nature* found its way into so many a library. However numerous might be the class to whom his astronomical researches and well-considered treatises on aërial phenomena commended themselves, we cannot but feel assured that the circle becomes enlarged when it embraces those who desire reliable information respecting the world in which we live. We can call to mind no more thorough or comprehensive a treatise on the subject than that which has just been issued, in an enlarged and revised form, by Messrs M'Phun & Son, the eminent Glasgow publishers. Throughout the pages of this interesting work we trace the master mind, whose deep research and thoughtful working out of difficult problems has placed within our reach a digest of all that is worth knowing of the earth, with its ocean, its atmosphere, its rivers, its people, and its varying climates. Geography is a branch of education which ever wields a fascination over the inquiring mind. What boy at school does not grasp readily the interesting recital of facts relating to other lands, as their varied populations, languages, and modes of life are sketched out by the apt preceptor? And when his school days are passed, who, more than an Englishman, embraces the opportunities afforded him for travel, adventure, and discovery? From Columbus to Livingstone, every age has witnessed the enterprise of the British race, whose explorations command universal admiration and respect. Mr Milner has collected a multitude of interesting facts such as will help the student and still further enrich the scholar's store of information; and we heartily commend these works to all who would, by easy stages, perfect themselves in the study of the world and its belongings. In the company of Mr Milner, the reader may scale the giddy mountain heights, and dip into the dales and valleys of every clime; he may span the trackless desert and the boundless prairie, glide silently down the tranquil river, or dash over eddying rapids; now pausing to gaze on cities and towns familiar to him in his own loved country, and then flying off to Alpine peaks, to rugged Russian steppes, wandering along under Oriental skies, and taking in the whole expanse "from China to Peru." Far away he leads us to the sultry tropics, or to the pack-ice and the huts of the Esquimaux—from dreaded Siberia, with its everlasting snow, to the tangled forests and jungle of India and the Far West. And as we pursue our journeys, what a fund of interesting information and anecdote we gather up! The manners and customs of all sorts and conditions of men; the marvellous phenomena of earth and air and sky; the origin, rise, and fall of empires; the multitudinous details of animal and vegetable life—all are here related concisely, yet perfectly, and in the most comprehensive manner possible. It is difficult to speak of such a compilation so as to do justice to its merits; the work is not one which may be taken up, read from end to end, and cast aside as "done with." It is a work for all time. To say that Mr Milner has done his work well would be but a sorry compliment after all. It is easy enough to collect at a given point a mass of stray facts and figures, of theories and equations; but the labour is to condense them into readable shape, so that while they fulfil the object sought from an educational point of view, they still do not nauseate or confuse the reader. This gigantic result has been admirably achieved in the volumes before us. The subjects are so classified as to render them of inestimable value for reference. The chapters on the disturbing forces throw much light upon the causes and effects of volcanic agency; while those on luminous meteors and atmospheric illusions are also deeply interesting. Then follows a descriptive geography of Europe, passing under review all the principal towns and cities in our own country, and then wandering away to our European possessions,

leading us through France, Germany, and the Rhine, and indeed every inch of the Continent, pointing out every spot which has been rendered famous by the records of the past. All the other continents are similarly treated, and a perfect encyclopædia of information respecting them is given. At the same time, in the department of descriptive geography, the territorial changes in Europe, consequent upon recent wars, in relation to Denmark, Prussia, Germany, France, Austria, and Italy are amply noticed. Due attention is also paid to altered political features in other parts of the world; as in Asia, by the rise of Kashgaria to the rank of an independent State in its central regions; in Africa, by the canalisation of the Isthmus of Suez connecting the Red Sea with the Mediterranean, and the discovery of diamond fields in the Trans Vaal district; in America, by the completion of the Central Pacific Railway, the addition of Alaska to the territory of the United States, the formation of the province of Manitoba amongst the British possessions, and the constitution of the Dominion of Canada. We are satisfied they need only to be seen to be universally admired and appreciated as an evidence of stupendous labour and research, and a trophy of skill, tact, and perseverance in compilation. The books are substantially bound, and got up in the very highest style of the art, forming an ornament to any drawing-room table. With unfeigned pleasure we commend these volumes to all who desire the best information, compiled in the best and most convenient form.

From the Edinburgh Courant of 8th July, 1872.

To make geography an attractive study is an educational feat. Mr M'Phun has gone to the expense of making the two volumes before us attractive books. Inside there is a plethora of interesting information about everything which the word geography comprehends. They are a complete library of geography. The man who should possess these two volumes would be blameworthy if any question in geography were allowed to puzzle him a single half-hour. The name of the Rev. Thos. Milner is a guarantee of accuracy and learned research.

From the Scotsman of 28th June, 1872.

It is now more than seven years since the first edition of the Rev. Thomas Milner's "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY" was published. It was at once recognized as an educational work of the highest value, in which sound geographical knowledge was conveyed in a most fascinating manner. But the years that have passed since the first edition appeared have brought changes in many matters relating to geography and geographical science. The study of physical geography has, rightly enough, become much more important than it was, and in connection therewith great additions have been made to the store of knowledge. If, then, the "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY" was to become a standard educational work, its information must be brought down to the present time. The Messrs M'Phun & Son, who have acquired the copyright of the book, appear to have fully realised this fact, and they have induced Mr Milner to revise his work. The result is, that, while in it every feature that distinguished the first edition is to be found in this, the information has been carefully brought up to the present mark. A whole section on mathematical and physical geography has been added, and down even to taking up the latest census returns the work is fully revised. This has so much expanded the book that it now appears in two handsome volumes. The engravings with which it was originally embellished are all reproduced, and some brilliantly coloured plates illustrative of the costumes of different nations are added. It is a work full of illustrative anecdote and interesting information. Much of it may be read as a work of history would be read, and all of it will be found attractive and valuable. Excellent maps accompany the book.

W. R. M'PHUN & SON, Publishers, Glasgow and London.

MILNER'S "GALLERY OF GEOGRAPHY."

From the Eastern Morning News and Hull Advertiser of 3rd July, 1872.

THE work, as it now stands, presents, in brilliant succession, delineations of the natural and political divisions of the globe, together with everything that is remarkable in their climate, scenery, architecture, language and national characteristics. The whole forms, in fact, a grand pictorial and descriptive Tour of the World, profusely and beautifully illustrated, the maps being coloured. Such a book should be in the hands of both young and old, abounding as it does in information concerning all countries and peoples—information geographically and statistically exact, yet set forth in the most popular and attractive form, and supplying the place of a score of illustrated books of travel. Even in Central Asia, the explorations of Eastern and Western Turkestan, &c., furnished by Messrs Hayward, Shaw, Forsyth, and the various Russian travellers in that little-known region, are carefully embodied. Under North America we find full notice of the Pacific Railway and the various territories (including Utah, and a passing allusion to the recent action of the United States Government towards the Mormons) which it now links to the older States of the Union. Turning to the State of Illinois, allusion is made to the calamitous fire at Chicago last October; and numerous other instances of careful re-editing might be mentioned. In Italy due prominence is given to the opening of the Mont Cenis Railway last year. The introductory chapters upon historical geography are themselves almost a complete work, and the successive explorations of the globe, illustrated by carefully selected and well-engraved plates, terminate with the notice of Hayward's murder in Central Asia in 1870. The book is as pleasant to read as many works of fiction, and its illustrations, twelve finely-coloured maps, six steel engravings, and above 350 woodcuts, are both beautiful and accurate.

From the Inverness Courier of 15th July, 1872.

ALTOGETHER the book is really a good one—a help to students and a pleasure to young readers, who love to turn over picturesque pages, and gather something of foreign nations and localities famous for deeds of patriotism and valour.

Extract from an able Article by the REV. JOHN JOHNSTON, *Balmaghie Free Church, Castle Douglas, on "Geographical Knowledge," which appeared in one of the Monthly Journals for September last.*

No such work could be popular nowadays without a plentiful supply of illustrations. In the work before us there is such a supply. We have pored over the illustrations with very great pleasure, and with profit also. With such a vast amount of interesting and graphic description, with its 354 high-class woodcuts, its steel engravings and maps, its costumes of different countries, given in full-length coloured portraits, and its index to upwards of 7000 names of places, we have what may be called *Mundus in domo*—the world with its past and present, its various climes and costumes, its wonderful scenes, and its magnificent cities, its ever-busy and ever-varying population. We cordially commend the *Gallery*, as forming a rich and most interesting collection of that which has been found profitable and pleasant in general science and in geographical research.

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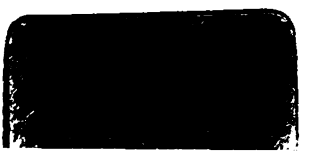

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